

**Remarks at the Dedication
Ceremony for the 9/11 Pentagon
Memorial in Arlington, Virginia**
September 11, 2008

Thank you all. Mr. Vice President; Secretary Gates; Madam Speaker; Justices of the Supreme Court; members of my Cabinet, administration; Members of Congress; Admiral Mullen and the Joint Chiefs; Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, a first-responder on September the 11th, 2001; directors of the Pentagon Memorial Fund—Mr. Chairman, congratulations; families and friends of the fallen; distinguished guests; fellow citizens: Laura and I are honored to be with you.

Seven years ago at this hour, a doomed airliner plunged from the sky, split the rock and steel of this building, and changed our world forever. The years that followed have seen justice delivered to evil men and battles fought in distant lands. But each day on this year—each year on this day, our thoughts return to this place. Here, we remember those who died. And here, on this solemn anniversary, we dedicate a memorial that will enshrine their memory for all time.

Building this memorial took vision and determination, and Americans from every corner of our country answered the call. Two young architects in New York City came up with the design. A foundry near St. Louis cast the steel. An Iraqi immigrant in Illinois gave the metal its luster. And citizens from across our Nation made contributions large and small to build this graceful monument.

The Pentagon Memorial will stand as an everlasting tribute to 184 innocent souls who perished on these grounds. The benches here bear each of their names. And beneath each bench is a shimmering pool filled with the water of life, a testament to those who were taken from us and to their memories that will live on in our hearts.

For the families and friends of the fallen, this memorial will be a place of remembrance. Parents will come here to remember children who boarded Flight 77 for a field trip and never emerged from the wreckage. Husbands and wives will come here to remember spouses who left for work one morning and never returned home. People from across our Nation will come here to remem-

ber friends and loved ones who never had the chance to say goodbye.

A memorial can never replace what those of you mourning a loved one have lost. We pray that you will find some comfort amid the peace of these grounds. We pray that you will find strength in knowing that our Nation will always grieve with you.

For all our citizens, this memorial will be a reminder of the resilience of the American spirit. As we walk among the benches, we will remember there could have been many more lives lost. On a day when buildings fell, heroes rose. Pentagon employees ran into smoke-filled corridors to guide their friends to safety. Firefighters rushed up the stairs of the World Trade Center as the towers neared collapse. Passengers aboard Flight 93 charged the cockpit and laid down their lives to spare countless others. One of the worst days in America's history saw some of the bravest acts in Americans' history. We'll always honor the heroes of 9/11. And here at this hallowed place, we pledge that we will never forget their sacrifice.

We also honor those who raised their hands and made the noble decision to defend our Nation in a time of war. When our enemies attacked the Pentagon, they pierced the rings of this building, but they could not break the resolve of the United States Armed Forces. Since 9/11, our troops have taken the fight to the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. Thanks to the brave men and women and all those who work to keep us safe, there has not been another attack on our soil in 2,557 days.

For future generations, this memorial will be a place of learning. The day will come when most Americans have no living memory of the events of September the 11th. When they visit this memorial, they will learn that the 21st century began with a great struggle between the forces of freedom and the forces of terror. They will learn that this generation of Americans met its duty. We did not tire; we did not falter; and we did not fail. They will learn that freedom prevailed because the desire for liberty lives in the heart of every man, woman, and child on Earth.

We can be optimistic about the future because we've seen the character and courage of those who defend liberty. We have been

privileged to live amongst those who have volunteered to spread the foundation of peace and justice, which is freedom.

Seven years ago this morning, police officer Cecil Richardson was on duty here at the Pentagon. He saw the terror that day with his own eyes. He says on some nights he can still smell the burning metal and smoke. Not long ago he wrote me, saying, "I remember the reasons we fight. I remember the losses we felt, and I remember the peace we will have."

That day of peace will come. And until it does, we ask a loving God to watch over our troops in battle. We ask Him to comfort the families who mourn, and we ask Him to bless our great land.

And now it's my honor to dedicate the Pentagon Memorial.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; former Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; James J. Laychak, president and chairman, board of directors, Pentagon Memorial Fund; architects Julie Beckman and Keith Kaseman; and Abe Yousif, owner, Buchtel Metal Finishing Corp. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Executive Order 13472—Executive Branch Responsibilities With Respect to Orders of Succession

September 11, 2008

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. It is the policy of the Federal Government to ensure that each executive branch agency can perform its essential functions and remain an effectively functioning part of the Federal Government under all conditions. Accordingly, each agency shall take all appropriate actions to establish, maintain, and, as necessary, revise an order of succession, or to propose presidential action to establish or revise an order of succession.

Sec. 2. Definitions. As used in this order:

(a) "agency" means:

- (i) an executive agency as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, other than the Government Accountability Office; and
- (ii) the United States Postal Service and the Postal Regulatory Commission; and

(b) "order of succession" means a list of officials by position who shall act as and perform the functions and duties of the office of the head of the agency in the event that the office-holder has died, resigned, or otherwise become unable to perform the functions and duties of the office. "Order of succession" does not include any order, rule, memorandum, or other document delegating or partially delegating the authority of an office.

Sec. 3. Orders of Succession Requiring Presidential Action.

(a) Each agency for which presidential action is required to establish an order of succession shall draft a proposed order of succession if no such order exists and, not later than 30 days from the date of this order, send such proposed draft order to the Counsel to the President for review and comment.

(b) Each agency described in subsection 3(a) of this order shall send any proposed updates or revisions to the agency's order of succession to the Counsel to the President for review and comment.

(c) Upon completion of the requirements set forth by subsections (a) or (b) of this section with respect to a proposed order, the agency shall submit the proposed order to the Office of Management and Budget in accordance with Executive Order 11030, as amended.

Sec. 4. Orders of Succession Not Requiring Presidential Action. (a) Each agency for which presidential action is not required to establish an order of succession because of the agency's existing legal authority shall establish and maintain such order in accordance with applicable law and any applicable guidance issued by the President or the Secretary of Homeland Security, including the laws and guidance regarding continuity plans and programs for the executive branch.

(b) Each agency described in subsection 4(a) of this order shall update and revise its